

A STUDY OF THE COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE PROGRAM IN
RELATION TO SOCIAL PROBLEMS AT
HARLEM BRANCH Y.M.C.A.

A THESIS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study is intended as an interpretative and descriptive statement of methods and techniques -- employed in the Counseling and Guidance Program at the Harlem Branch Young Men's Christian Association in the City of New York. The Term "Counseling and Guidance" refers to the comprehensive program of activities directed toward orientating and acquainting the individual with various ways in which he may discover and use his natural endowments. Arthur J. Jones defines counseling as "the activity where (sic) the available facts gathered together and the individual's experiences are focused upon a specific problem to aid him in its solution."¹

The life of Counseling and Guidance represents an interwoven pattern through which we are able to thread a gigantic human effort to secure two ends: (1) the support of the expenses of civilization, and (2) the maintenance of the individual himself.²

Counseling and Guidance in relation to social problems in this agency grows out of its program activity, and is a

¹Arthur J. Jones, Principles of Guidance (New York, 1934), p. 268.

²John M. Brewer, History of Vocational Guidance (New York, 1942), p. vii.

compilation of purposes, policies, practices, and procedures agreed upon by the counseling cabinet in the agency. The development and administration of the program is comprized of three main services: (1) registration, (2) advisement, and (3) referral services. The functions of these stated services are carried out and coordinated by an organizational hierarchy extended from the Central Counseling Branch to all Young Men's Christian Associations in the City.

This study is based upon the assumption that guidance differs from direction, and counseling from advice, at least from positive advice upon large matters such as helping individuals in the selection of a calling.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to give a descriptive picture of services rendered individuals which aid them toward achieving satisfactory social and useful experience in their educational and vocational endeavors. From various social aspects the study places emphasis upon self-help and self-direction.

The emphasis on individuals is the foundation of the guidance and counseling program. The ultimate objective of the program is to aid individuals in leadership training and responsibility, and thereby serving as a guide for persons in formulating wholesome religious values. Its purpose is the maximum personal growth of individuals within their

potentialities and their effective adjustment to life in all its aspects.

Scope and Limitation

This study is limited to the guidance and counseling program of the Harlem Branch Young Men's Christian Association.

The study covers the period from May, 1946 through June, 1947.

Method of Procedure

Preparation of this study was accomplished through personal interviews with members of the counseling cabinet and through conferences with Mr. Charles M. Campbell, Secretary of the Counseling Department. Additional Interviews were held with professional counselors in several other social agencies.

This writer also had use of the agency's records, from which much of the data of this thesis is taken. This thesis also consists of data from pamphlets, books, unpublished material received from the New York Vocational Service Center and periodicals.

After making an intensive diagnosis of the program of the agency, an attempt was made to analyze and give some interpretation of the material presented in this thesis so that specific conclusions could be derived or reached.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF COUNSELING

One of the most significant developments in education during the past quarter century was the counseling and guidance movement. Beginning in Boston, Massachusetts during the first decade of the present century, it has developed with amazing rapidity, and now nearly every city of fifty thousand inhabitants or more has some definitely organized work of this kind. This rapid development is sufficient evidence of the fundamental importance of the movement.

A survey of the period since 1900 reveals the rise of a number of educational movements; some to flourish and then disappear, others to grow into importance. Of these latter, counseling and guidance is one of the most significant from both the individual and social standpoints.¹

Many times in reading about social problems an individual may get the idea that every person has possibilities of accomplishing anything he desires; the only thing that might hinder him is proper development. Counseling and Guidance is based upon the fact that human beings need help and guidance to assist them toward proper development. In our complex society people in general are not capable of solving life's

¹ John M. Brewer, History of Vocational Guidance (New York, 1942), p. 1.

problems successfully without help.

The approach to counseling today, as Carl R. Rogers points out, is not that of providing a service by which specific problems may be solved. Rather, it is a technique by which human individuals may be taught to adopt habits of mind and emotion that will make the person able to solve his own problems as they may arise.²

In the period of the 1920's the interest in the adjustment of the individual was primarily analytical and diagnostic. In social work it was the period of the flowering of the case history; in psychology there was a lull in giving tests; in educational guidance both the records and tests grew apace; in the psychiatric area multi-syllabled diagnostic labels blossomed into elaborate diagnostic formulation. Never had so much been learned about individual personalities. Now as time moves on we find these groups along with other groups of similar interest, giving more consideration to the dynamic processes through which adjustment is improved. Our process has shifted from diagnosis to therapy, from understanding the individual to an interest in the processes through which he may find help.³ Social workers who are concerned with the adjustments of individuals should desire to become more

²Carl R. Rogers, Counseling and Psychotherapy (Chicago, 1942), pp. 2-3.

³Ibid., p. 4.

effective in therapeutic ways in assisting people to readjust. Social work is the only profession which offers any large amount of therapeutic help to the maladjusted person. The basic tool of social work is the counseling and guidance process. In dealing with well established difficulties, effective treatment may demand many interviews.⁴

L. F. Shaffer well points out suggestions that are essentially motivating such as, "You're doing well," "You're improving,"⁵ (all in hoping that this will strengthen his motivation in those directions). Such statements deny the problem that exists, and they deny the feeling which the individual has about the problem. The focus of counseling and guidance is to promote growth of the individual in self-direction.⁶ Guidance may be given to groups or individuals, but it is always designed to help individuals even though they be in a group.

The Meaning of Counseling and Guidance

A person should carefully distinguish between counseling and the many other things that a counselor may do. A. H.

⁴Harriet R. Mourer, Personality Adjustment and Domestic Discord (New York, 1936), p. 220.

⁵L. F. Shaffer, The Psychology of Adjustment (Boston, 1945), pp. 480-481.

⁶Arthur J. Jones, The Principles of Guidance (New York), p. 61.

Edgerton, in a study made more than twenty years ago by use of the questionnaire method, analyzed the various activities of counselors in a number of representative schools. He found these activities ranging from interviewing people, teaching classes in occupation, finding jobs for students, and following them up, giving tests, and doing research work in the study of occupations.⁷ It is sufficient here merely to point out the wide range of activities in which counselors engage. Edgerton's study makes a very valuable contribution by showing conditions as they are, but it does not tell much about what counseling really is. Members of some school staff who are called counselors do many things that are spoken of as counseling, but only a few of which are actually counseling. Counselors as teachers do many things as is shown in "The Commonwealth Study" by Charters,⁸ but by no means can all of these things classified as teaching.

Webster's Dictionary defines counseling as "inter-changing opinions, mutual advisement, deliberating together."

Effective counseling consists of a definitely structured, permissive relationship which allows the client to gain an understanding of himself to a degree which enables him to take positive steps in the light of

⁷A. H. Edgerton, Vocational Guidance and Counseling (New York, 1926), p. 15.

⁸W. W. Charters, The Commonwealth Teachers Training Study (Chicago, 1929), p. 162.

his new orientation.⁹

The aim of counseling is not to solve one particular problem, but to assist the individual to grow, so that he can cope with the present problem and with later problems in a better integrated fashion.¹⁰

Therapy is not a matter of doing something to an individual or of inducing him to do something for himself. It is instead a matter of freeing him for normal growth and development, of removing obstacles so that he can again move forward.¹¹

It aims directly at the growth of the individual, at his increased independence and integration; it is centered on the individual and not on the problem.¹²

Fundamental Basis for Counseling and Guidance

Many people fall short of this idea of social adjustment. Numerous and complex factors hinder man's development toward social betterment. The fundamental basis for any counseling program may be discovered in the factors leading people to strive for economic security, better health conditions, social adjustment, personal status, mental security, better housing, and educational opportunities.¹³

The social-civic area of counseling is generally interpreted as meaning all the relationships of men with their

⁹Carl R. Rogers, op. cit., p. 18.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 26.

¹¹Ibid., p. 29.

¹²Arthur J. Jones, op. cit., p. 227.

¹³Paul E. Klein, Counseling Techniques in Adult Education (New York, 1946), p. 130.

fellowmen economically, politically, socially, and culturally. The socially adjusted person is one who can contribute to society as a whole, or one who conforms to its standards and at the same time realizes maximum personal satisfaction.

In Social-civic guidance the counselor must always keep in mind the needs of society while trying to aid a client toward adjustment to his personal problem. There are very few conditions that contribute to social maladjustment that can not be corrected by education.

While bearing in mind the fundamental basis for counseling and guidance, the "whole man" must be considered and not just the person as a worker or member of society. What is his philosophy of life? What are his character and moral outlook? How does he spend his leisure time? How well does he understand and fit into the social scheme? Is he healthy in body and mind? All these aspects of the individual contribute to personality and the extent to which personality becomes pleasant and integrated, or lame and maladjusted. What is a person's philosophy of life, that is, what are his ideals, his beliefs, his attitudes; what yardstick does he use for measuring his own actions and those of other people? The philosophy of the individual may and is often difficult to discover; he may not have consciously formulated it. The particular philosophy of the individual may vary enormously from the broadest scientific view of the universe to the narrowest creed of some religious enthusiast; but, whatever

it is, if it gives confidence, it has a profound influence.¹⁴ In the face of handicaps and adversity, a man's philosophy of life may lead to a wasteful and even a criminal life.

The counselor should be able to help the individual client on the basis of his personal characteristics, interests and abilities. Counseling and guidance is a cooperative phase of our society rather than a competitive phase. It is a part of our society where people are cooperating with one another rather than competing against one another. It is a process that exemplifies individuals striving to aid rather than to exploit.

¹⁴William H. Burham, The Wholesome Personality (New York, 1932), p. 62.

CHAPTER III

DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE PROGRAM AT THE HARLEM BRANCH Y.M.C.A.

Beginning in 1927 and 1928 Counseling and Guidance began as a result of a sizeable grant from one of the New York City's foundations. This program varied somewhat in accordance with the unique responsibilities founded by the different branches of the Y.M.C.A. in serving their respective clienteles. The counseling programs were tied in closely with the membership personnel departments; however, in some branches of the Y.M.C.A. counseling programs operate in conjunction with placement activities. One or two more highly specialized counseling programs function in close coordination with some other branch activities as a member branch of another Y.M.C.A. center in the city.

The Counseling and Guidance activities had their ups and downs throughout the years before the Vocational Service Center was organized to function with the various Y.M.C.A. agencies throughout the city. The operation was especially difficult during the depression period. Fortunately, however, the program functioned throughout the entire period, providing nucleus of organization around which discussion centered for the purpose of centralizing the program.¹ For a number of

¹Guidance Committee, Y.M.C.A. National Board, Counseling (New York, 1946), p. 2.

years Dr. J. H. Bentley and those associated with him advocated the need for a centralized service with a department in the various Y.M.C.A. branches of New York City.²

A committee was set up to study the situation more carefully and make recommendations. This committee became especially active following our entry into World War II, since it was quite obvious that there would be an unprecedented need for more specialized counseling facilities with the return of men and women from the armed forces and war industries. Consequently a plan was recommended and adopted which not only provided for a centralized professional counseling and placement service, but also for more general counseling facilities and placement services at each of the thirteen Y.M.C.A. branches in the city. The plan was put into operation with the establishment of the Vocational Service Center in January, 1944.

The Schwamb Plan provided that a general well equipped counseling office be manned by one or more full or part-time secretaries, who had been carefully selected, trained for the work and should be maintained at each of the Y.M.C.A. branches. A general counselor would therefore be available to any Y.M.C.A. member or non-member whom the agency might feel desirable to admit to its activities or services.

²
Ibid.

Throughout the services from an administrative point of view, the counselor consistently stresses the need for adequate training for the occupations which people intend to enter. The objective is to demonstrate the value of vocational counseling and to further its recognition as a public responsibility, and as a service that should be made available beyond the limits of private agencies. In the light of the need for vocational guidance, one of the important functions regarding this need is to provide information concerning opportunities for training offered by the various educational and vocational institutions of the city (both private and public). In a complex urban industrial society many patterns of life exist. The wisest, most foreseeing adult can scarcely grasp the implications of his own conduct or scarcely decide wisely in all issues that face him throughout life.³ There is little wonder that this kind of world has become bewildering for those who in the immature years have thrust upon them responsibility for numerous decisions. Guidance and counseling, with the best wisdom of adults, must be made available to adolescents and youths if they are to make the transition to adulthood with a minimum of trial and error, emotional fatigue, and anxiety.⁴

³Paul H. Landis, Adolescence and Youth (New York, 1945), p. 447.

⁴Joseph V. Hanna, Counseling Cabinet Handbook of New York Y.M.C.A. (New York, 1947), p. 5.

Counseling has grown to be an important factor toward social betterment.

The present formally organized counseling program of Harlem Branch Y.M.C.A. began its operation January 3, 1944 with the opening of the Vocational Service Center. This organized program was made possible by twenty years of pioneering by secretaries in several branches of the Y.M.C.A. under the leadership of Dr. J. H. Bentley, then Program Secretary of the Y.M.C.A. of New York City.

Aspects of Social Administrative Counseling

It is the function of the general counselor to discuss with the individual any situation or problems involving need for assistance, and assist him in any way possible. This relationship might serve to introduce the individual to one or more Y.M.C.A.'s or other community activities or services. In certain instances the counselor will discuss with the client, his general educational plans, his social and home relationships.

Where the individual is found to be in need of more highly professional relationships, the counselor will wisely refer him to other specialists and agencies for such services. Where it is expedient that the client make careful plans for his career, or when he desires job placement, then it is the responsibility of the general counselor to refer him to the Vocational Service Center for such help. The counselor is aware of the fact that the need for guidance is manifold.

The program endeavors to appreciate more fully the social, moral, and economic as well as the intellectual needs of persons in a complex social order.

It is the prime duty of guidance...to help the individual discover his own talents, in comparison to the opportunities of the World, and help prepare himself so that he can find or develop a place in which he can live a well balanced life, and contribute his part to the welfare of his fellowmen.⁵

The counseling machine in the agency has been worked in carefully with the interrelationship to the Vocational Service Center. The person being referred from the Branch to the Center is given an introduction slip as shown below, and

INTRODUCTION —

Date.....

To.....Appointment*: Date..... Hour.....

Vocational Service Branch, Y.M.C.A.

40 East 40th St., New York 16, N. Y., L.E. 2-8615

YES ☐Introducing Y Member No ☐

Address....., who desires

Employment....., Personal Counseling....., Aptitude Testing.....,

Educational Counseling....., Occupational Information....., Financial Credit.....,

or

Sender.....Y Branch, Church, or Agency

* NOTE TO HOLDER OF THIS APPOINTMENT:—If you cannot keep this appointment, please 'phone LExington 2-8615 and cancel it, or ask for another date.

The following action was taken at V.S.C.:

.....

.....

Date.....Signature

⁵ Leslie L. Chisholm, Guiding Youth in The Modern Secondary School (New York, 1945), p. 448.

which is made out in triplicate, one copy of which remains at the branch, a second is mailed to the Vocational Service Center in advance of the appointment.

A prompt report is made by the Service Center to the referred person, pointing out such problems as were encountered, and in general giving any suggestions which might be of assistance to the Y.M.C.A. and to the branch in any further dealings with the person. The counseling personnel works toward helping individuals achieve the social objectives that are ever present for our generation. Some of these broader social objectives that are of paramount importance can be stated as follows: (1) the improvement of health, (2) adequate housing, (3) adjustment in the birth-rate, both quantitative and qualitative, (4) better nutrition, (5) greater stability of the family, (6) reduction of pathological types in the population, (7) greater economic security for all, (8) greater educational opportunity.⁶

Table 1 shows the types of placements made by the Harlem Branch Y.M.C.A. through the Vocational Service Center from January 1947 through March 1947.

The managerial type of placements include: salesmen, retail dealers, sales clerks, general clerical workers, secretaries and other such workers. The skilled and

⁶Paul H. Landis, op. cit., pp. 448-49.

TABLE 1

TYPES OF PLACEMENTS MADE BY THE HARLEM BRANCH Y.M.C.A.
THROUGH THE VOCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER FROM
JANUARY 1947 THROUGH MARCH 1947*

Types of placements	Number	Per cent
Total	300	100
Managerial	30	10
Skilled and semi-skilled	75	25
Unskilled	180	60
Professional	15	5

*Harlem Branch Y.M.C.A. Counseling and Guidance Department

semi-skilled placements include those persons engaged in such work as: clothing workers, machinists, mechanics, truck drivers, cab drivers, and painters. The unskilled workers are those persons whose work consisted of janitorial and domestic work. The professional types of placements include: teachers, artists, musicians and other professional workers.

The leading factors that were important in the placement as shown in Table 1 are: capacities, needs, and the interest of each client.

CHAPTER IV

NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE SERVICES

The Vocational Service Center is considered as an extension of the Y.M.C.A. branch program. The nature and scope of the services include all aspects of the center. Referral to the service center is done only by designated persons.

The virtue of the nature and scope of the counseling program centers around two fundamental aspects: (1) data, instead of guesswork; (2) permanent records instead of memory.¹ By obtaining complete background and personal data relating to the client, the counselor in the Y.M.C.A. is able to help the client more intelligently than he would had he been provided with only impressions and hasty estimates obtained from brief personal contacts. One author on the subject goes so far as to say that "counseling without data amounts to quackery."² The chief interest and objective of counseling at the Harlem Branch Y.M.C.A. are the development and improvement of all persons it may have to serve. The agency has comprehensive records that are positive factors in accomplishing these desired ends.

¹Paul E. Klien, Counseling Techniques in Adult Education (New York, 1946), p. 66.

²D. W. Lefever, Archie M. Turrell and Henry I. Weitzel, Principles and Techniques of Guidance (New York, 1941), p.279.

The guidance process in the agency continues, and it is here that individuals are guided into the program insights and directions are gained through personalized attention. The inception and the ongoing continuation of the guidance process are located in the activities phase. It is in this phase of the program that the individual needs are discovered. The scope of the counseling activities also relates to problems of health, education, employment, and religion.

Staff Personnel

Functions of counseling cannot be delegated to different members of the staff in any mutually exclusive fashion. In the counseling and guidance department at the Harlem Branch Y.M.C.A., records show that all members of the staff make important contributions to the cooperative program. There are four regular hired workers in the agency, and each worker has something to add to the whole.

A study of the program reveals that there are two general counselors in the agency. By general counselors, the writer does not mean a highly specialized expert, such as a psychologist. These counselors have had counseling courses along with other counselors throughout the Vocational Service Center. Thus, we can wisely refer to them as well trained counselors. One of the counselors serves as administrator of the program and guidance department. This serves as an important factor toward program planning throughout the

agency. Each counselor has a secretary who has been trained in administrative work, and it is fitting and proper to refer to them as specialists.

Training of Counselors

In preparation for meeting counseling needs, the Executive Cabinet of the New York City Y.M.C.A. arranged and carried out two series of conferences or training sessions for the upgrading of secretaries in the techniques of counseling. The first series was held in the fall of 1944, and the second in the spring of 1945. Each of the two series was made up of six two-hour sessions.³ The following gives a general outline of what was considered in the sessions:

I. Series of Conferences on Counseling

A. Objectives of Counseling

1. Objectives of counseling in terms of Y.M.C.A. responsibility
2. General objectives
3. Specific objectives in relation to different areas of Y.M.C.A. activity

B. Technique of Interviewing

1. Establishing rapport
2. Securing and verifying information
3. Imparting information
4. Motivating the individual
5. Analysis - Synthesis

II. The Art of Overcoming Biases and Prejudices

³ Joseph V. Hanna, Counseling Cabinet Handbook of New York Y.M.C.A. (New York, 1947), p. 38.

- A. A discussion of common biases and prejudices
- B. Biases and prejudices most likely to characterize Y.M.C.A. Secretaries
- C. Technique for overcoming prejudices
- III. How to Determine the Individual's Aptitudes and Interests
 - A. Determination for interest
 - 1. Through previously acquired information and skills
 - 2. Through normal activities and hobbies
 - B. Determination of aptitudes
 - 1. Through appraisal of previous educational experience
 - 2. Through appraisal of previous occupational or business experience
 - 3. Through explanatory and try-out experiences
 - 4. Through objective tests
- IV. How to Detect and Deal with Maladjusted Attitudes and Personality Disturbances. (The normal individual with abnormal problems.)
 - A. Symptoms of maladjustive behavior
 - B. Recognizing and dealing with characteristic common problems
 - 1. The submissive individual
 - 2. The antagonistic individual
 - 3. The compensating individual
 - 4. The rationalizing individual
 - 5. The boastful individual
- V. Appraisal and Evaluation of Guidance Services
 - A. How shall we evaluate guidance services?
 - B. What follow-up procedures should be employed?
 - C. What implications do these questions have for the counseling program of the Y.M.C.A.? 4

⁴Ibid., pp. 38-40.

Selective Intake Policy

Out of the necessity of controlling intake, the "Selective Intake Policy" was created to establish some direction in regard to the orders in which various classes of individuals are to be served. This policy was also approved by the Vocational Service Center staff in September, 1945.⁵ The policy states that any Y.M.C.A. members who might be handicapped will be interviewed and served if possible, or he may be referred to the proper agency, that is, if a referral is in the interest of the client.

Policy with respect to Placement.--Priority I consists of all Y.M.C.A. members; people referred by local churches who are members or definitely related to their church life; veterans of World War II; non-Y.M.C.A. members may receive extended services after a clearance has been made.

Priority II consists of non-Y.M.C.A. members referred by other agencies after a clearance, usually by phone.

Age of Applicants.--The counseling and Guidance is most valuable to persons who have most of their lives ahead of them. Those persons who are sixteen years of age and over will be registered as applicants. Fifteen year old persons desiring part-time or vacation work may give their names and addresses to one of the secretaries. They will be informed by

⁵Ibid., p. 25.

letter when there are chances of employment for them. With regard to an upper age limit, priority on applicants referred to the agency by churches will not be refused registration because of age.

Applicants within the Priority II group will be registered and served as far as age is concerned if they are not above the fifty to fifty-five year range.

Only women applicants who come within the range of Priority I will be served and who are not seeking domestic positions.

Handicapped Applicants.--In general, the program is not intended to provide the specialized service or care of hospitals, psychiatrists, and agencies specializing in clients with serious handicaps. Disabled veterans are cared for by the Veterans Administration. However, all veterans applying to the agency are interviewed and will be given an appointment at the Vocational Service Center and then referred to the proper agency, which in most cases, will be the Veterans Administration.

The Counseling and Guidance Department at the Harlem Branch Y.M.C.A. does not register and place the Blind, Deaf or Hard of Hearing; Spastic Paralytics; Epileptics (except the mildest cases); and psychotics. Those with orthopedic disabilities which make them unable to hold most jobs (amputations might so classify an applicant, for example) will be referred to special agencies that deal with handicapped

people.

Through Vocational Service Center the agency may register and try to place cardiacs, the relative severity of whose conditions, as indicated on a fairly recent medical statement (in the agencies records) will help determine whether they may or may not be referred.

Orthopedically handicapped people may be registered according to their ability to work. Paralytics, not severely affected, are also registered providing they have almost full use of arms and legs. Emotionally maladjusted people are accepted only if it seems that they will be stable and useful on a job and will cooperate with employers and fellow workers.

Mentally ill and very dull persons are admitted to the service if they appear able to do at least ordinary unskilled work. An I. Q. of seventy-five serves as the average score for these type of people. Persons with other disabilities such as varicose veins and hernia are considered only if they are not seriously affected.

The Placement and Referral Service

The Placement and Referral Services relate partly with occupational classification. Individuals seeking professional, managerial, clerical, skilled, and unskilled jobs may be referred to the Vocational Service Center for employment. The agency (Y.M.C.A.) is able to make some direct job

placements which is a duplication of service. But any time the job cannot be filled directly the agency then allows it to be filled by the Vocational Service Center. The counselors roughly determine the clients' interest and job qualifications. Then he makes referrals according to the daily list of available jobs that is given to each counselor.

The following is a list of jobs on a typical day in August 1947:

DAILY LIST OF AVAILABLE JOBS

TUESDAY - AUGUST 26, 1947

DESK B - HUMMERSTON AND SCHNAEBELE

JUNIOR STENOGRAPHER - REAL ESTATE INSURANCE

Typing, knowledge of stenography

Insurance knowledge helpful

Hours: 5 days

Salary: \$30.35 per week

ASSISTANT NIGHT AUDITOR

Knowledge of transcripts, Appearance, personality, hotel experience necessary.

Hours: 6 days; 12 - 8 a.m.

Salary: \$48.00 per week

ASSISTANT SHIPPING CLERK - Drug Business

Office or sales work, packing and shipping, learn medical business.

Hours: 5 days, 7 - 5

Salary: \$30.00 per week; 10% increase in one month

ASSISTANT EDITOR FOR TRADE PUBLICATION

Writing and editing. Training in biochemistry or related science.

Hours: 9-5; 40 hours.
Salary: Open

DESK C - MR. DURFEY

AUTO INSTRUCTOR

Must be experienced. Experience with diesel controls.
Hours: 48 hours
Salary: \$50.00 per week.

MOVIE PROJECTOR OPERATOR - Hampton Bay, LI

Operate movie projector; someone who has graduated from "Y" courses with experience.
Age: Prefer single man.
Salary: Open Hours: ---

ELEVATOR BOY - Hotel

Some experience.
Hours: 6 days; from 4 p.m. - 12 p.m.
Salary: \$30.00 per week plus 2 meals

DESK F - MISS WHITE

TYPIST - STENOGRAPHER 1 - 37

(1) Secretary to man - \$40 - \$50 per week
(2) Permanent - Learn to type stencils
(3) Piece work
(4) Temporary
Hours: 5 days; 8:45 - 5:30
Salary: On basis of ability

PART TIME SHIPPING BOY

Regular shipping clerk duties.
Hours: 1:00 - 6:00
Salary: \$0.75 per hour if experienced.

PART TIME GENERAL HELPER

General help, some errands.
Age: 17-20
Hours: To be arranged
Salary: \$0.65 per hour

DESK F - MR. DAYSODA MAN

Experienced soda man.

Hours: 6 days; 9:30 - 6:30; Sundays

Salary: \$30 per week plus tips; raise after 3 months.

NIGHT PORTER - Restaurant

Cleaning, mopping, clean brass, no dishwashing. Sober, trustworthy, from 2 to 7 a.m. man is alone.

Investigate reference.

Hours: 6 days; 10 p.m. - 8:00 a.m.; Sunday

Salary: \$50 per week plus 2 meals.

SALESMAN - Stationery Store

Regular salesman duties, keep stock in order, inside selling. Experience in retail, commercial and social stationery if possible.

Hours: 1 - 11:30 p.m.; Sundays off

1 night per week off from 6:30 p.m.

Salary: \$45 per week if experienced, less if not.

At the end of each month the agency receives a consolidated monthly report from the Vocational Service Center concerning persons served by referrals from the Harlem Branch Y.M.C.A. of New York City.

Table 2 shows a disposition of men who came to the attention of the Counseling and Guidance Department from August, 1946 through June, 1947.

Table 3 reveals data on Table 2 (a comprehensive survey of) fifteen hundred persons who came to the attention of the Counseling and Guidance Department for a period of one year ending in June, 1947.

TABLE 2

DISPOSITION OF MEN WHO CAME TO THE COUNSELING
AND GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT FROM AUGUST 1946
THROUGH JUNE 1947*

DISPOSITION	AUG.	SEPT.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.	JAN.	FEB.	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	TOTAL
Monthly Registration	102	162	85	55	96	84	145	105	61	41	201	1137
Referred to V.S.C. by Harlem Branch Y.M.C.A.	85	132	75	45	87	75	139	86	45	41	195	1005
Referrals registered with V.S.C.	50	90	68	31	78	58	94	85	24	38	150	766
Job placement by Y.M.C.A.	12	21	8	10	7	5	6	12	7	0	2	90
Referrals that did not report to V.S.C.	35	42	7	14	9	17	35	1	21	3	45	229
Decisions pending	11	31	0	6	19	10	12	19	8	4	20	140
Jobs not accepted by client	15	11	9	0	3	7	3	0	0	2	25	75
Referral to hospitals (Veterans)	4	1	2	0	3	2	3	0	0	0	1	16
Number of clients referred to other agencies	5	9	2	1	2	4	0	12	9	2	4	50
Number that used veterans services	3	8	2	0	0	3	13	10	0	2	12	53
Number that received aptitude testing	0	0	0	0	1	2	4	5	4		10	26
V.S.C. referrals to employers	36	50	45	24	46	41	60	43	12	30	97	479

*Harlem Branch Y.M.C.A. Counseling and Guidance Department.

TABLE 3

A COMPREHENSIVE SURVEY OF 1500 PERSONS SERVED BY THE
COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT 1946 THROUGH
JUNE, 1947*

AGE AND FAMILY DISPOSITION	NUMBER	PERCENT
Number of persons under 21 years of age	405	27
Number of persons over 21 years of age	1095	73
Married persons	540	36
Single Men	960	64
Number of persons with children	420	28
Number of persons without children	1080	72
EDUCATIONAL STATUS		
Elementary School completed	630	42
High School completed	555	37
Without Elementary education	210	14
Educational Status not known	15	1
College completed	60	4
Higher education obtained	30	2
VETERANS	12000	80
Non-Veterans	300	20
CHURCH MEMBERSHIP		
Protestant church members	855	57
Catholic church members	195	13
Non-Church members	450	31
EMPLOYMENT		
Persons with professional training	90	6
Skilled	240	16
Semi-skilled	255	17
Non-skilled	915	61
Unemployed	1305	87
Number employed	195	13

*Harlem Branch Y.M.C.A. Counseling and Guidance Department.

Relationships and Resources in the Community

In view of the guidance and counseling program's comprehensive interest in the total needs of individuals, problems are encountered which fall outside the scope of treatment in the existing facilities in the agency. For this reason, it is important to the agency to maintain knowledge of the specialized services available in the community and to establish and develop relationships with them. Therefore, the agency keeps on hand a card file of resources in the community. The Directory of Social Agencies of the City of New York also proves helpful in this respect.

CHAPTER V

THE VOCATIONAL SERVICE BRANCH

The Vocational Service Center, like the counseling and guidance program of the Harlem Y.M.C.A. Branch, was organized in accordance with the Schwamb Plan, and by providing counseling and placement facilities on a professional level, serves to compliment effectively, as has been indicated, rather than to supplant the counseling activities carried on by the Y.M.C.A. branches.¹ There have been minor changes in the organization of the Vocational Service Center within the past year, but it seems desirable briefly its present organizational set-up, and to give a glimpse of the scope of its varied services.

The Center is under the general administration of Executive Director. He has a number of major assistants who are responsible for supervising the general activities in the different areas. These are the Program Secretary, the Psychologist and Director of Training and Research, and a versatile third assistant who presently serves as Office Manager, Public Relations Secretary, and Credit Counselor. The general duties of these staff members vary, and many times their duties are changed. These duties and changes apply to

¹Guidance Committee, Y.M.C.A. National Board, Counseling (New York, 1946) p. 2.

the entire program of the Center with the exception of certain aspects of the Veterans Advisement Program. This latter division due to its official relations with the Veterans Administration, and relatively of a temporary nature of the project, although closely affiliated with other aspects of the program, is regarded as a somewhat separate unit. It is now under the immediate supervision of the Psychologist and Director of Training and Research.²

The present activities of the Vocational Service Center may be described under the headings: (1) Counseling and Testing, (2) Placement, (3) Credit Aid, and (4) Veterans Advisement.³

The Counselor's approach is closely related to that of the social case worker.⁴ The apparent reason for counseling is frequently the need for developing an educational and vocational plan for the youth and the adult. The plan is often dependent upon the solution of other problems and the Vocational Counselor often finds himself aiding with problems almost as varied as those which face social case workers.

²Ibid.

³The Vocational Service Center is one of the operating divisions of the Vocational Service Branch, which also operates a housing facility as a part of its Credit and Relief Program.

⁴George E. Bigge, "Vocational Guidance," Social Work Year Book (ed) R. H. Kurtz (New York, 1945) p. 469.

Counseling and Testing

Specialized counseling and testing facilities had been maintained continuously at one or more of the Y.M.C.A. Branches in New York City from 1928 to the opening of the Vocational Service Center in January, 1944 -- a period of sixteen years.⁵ Within this period, a well-crystallized philosophy with respect to the place of specialized counseling within the Y.M.C.A. structure, and in relation to its practices of testing and counseling have been developed. Able workers now come to the agency already equipped with time tested skills that have been inspired by a tradition which has survived the years of pioneering, including the lean years of the depression.

Test scores are not useful in counseling unless they are interpreted in terms of persons' probabilities of success in school curriculum or occupational competition. In other words the counselor must understand the meaning of a test score. This meaning is discovered by comparing the client's score with educational and vocational ability profiles. It is not enough to know that a person has a percentile rank of seventy on an intelligence test. Is this equal to the scores of other persons who have maintained a satisfactory standing in the same type of work? Likewise the counselor must know

⁵ Guidance Committee, op. cit., p. 2.

whether the individual's percentile rank of seventy in a test of mechanics.⁶ Thus, it can be seen that testing alone is not sufficient for counseling. The counselor in the Vocational Service Center must use norms, standards, and profiles in diagnosing ability.

The counseling and testing facilities are utilized most widely by those in the process of planning their careers -- a process traditionally referred to as educational and vocational guidance. However, the agency has learned through many years of experience that the counseling problems presented by individuals cannot easily be placed in categories. The need for skill in making and retaining friends, in getting on with other people in close teamwork relationship, are important aspects in educational and vocational planning. Emotional conflicts may defeat all efforts to adjust unless the stated aspects are resolved. All these and other problems are dealt with in the counseling program, either directly or by appropriate referral to other agencies.

Just here it seems wise, profitable, and conducive to describe one or two common problems and to indicate how the Vocational Service Center facilities are brought to bear on these problems. The most difficult task is orientating the client to the nature of the assistance which he may expect to

⁶E. G. Williamson, Introduction to High School Counseling (New York, 1940) p. 159.

receive. A number of persons are naive in indicating the belief that the agency can solve their most crucial problems for them. They assume the attitude that "you're the doctor! What is the verdict?" Many people are oversold on the value of a certain instrument or technique, especially anything equivalent to a psychological test. Most counselors have dealt with such attitudes of childlike thinking in these "magical" tools and in the "omniscience of the counselor."⁷ There can be no doubt that psychometric tests of abilities, achievements, aptitudes, interests, and personality traits or adjustments are genuinely useful in meeting the diagnostic studies of maladjusted individuals.⁸

Early in the counselor-counselee relationship at the Vocational Service Center a methodical attempt is made to disabuse the mind of the misconceptions of the objectives of counseling, and it endeavors to substitute for dependence a more realistic attitude as to what may be properly expected from the service. Early in the preliminary interview the limitations and possibilities of the service -- or any of the counseling services -- are pointed out to him. An attempt is made to indicate the use of psychological tests in sensible perspective -- at best as supplementary aids. The services

⁷Guidance Committee, op. cit., p. 2.

⁸Carl R. Rogers, Counseling and Psychotherapy (New York, 1942), pp. 249-50.

and facilities available are interpreted to him mainly as instruments which he himself will use in attempting to solve his problem, with the counselor holding himself in readiness to assist where needed. The counselee is not encouraged to proceed further until he shows evidence of understanding the proper relationship with the counselor.

In spite of early orientation through the preliminary interview there is frequently a recurrence of this attitude of over-dependency in the client at a later stage of the counseling. In the process of assessing the significance of test scores, school grades, occupational experience, and the like, it is not usual for the client to expect to be told what occupation he should choose. This is especially likely to be true where the client still lacks information about vocational fields, and opportunities, and is at a loss in regard to seek information about such fields and opportunities. At this time stage, the facilities of the library are brought into play. The Vocational Service Center has maintained from its beginning a library well-equipped with books, magazines and vocational materials, school and college catalogues, and the like. Filing and cataloguing systems are so arranged as to make these materials quickly available according to the need. The librarian cooperates with the counselor and client in helping to locate needed information, and in giving supervision to the client's reading as may seem desirable. Many clients who are vague as to their objectives

acquires more crystallized interests after a period of general "browsing" followed by more definite exploration of one or more fields. From the writer's observation the library has thus become one of the most widely used facilities. The library and other facilities used in this process of self-exploration are helpful in challenging the clients to become masters of their own destiny.

Placement

The placement program of the Y.M.C.A. of New York City dates back as early as 1852. Records show that placement facilities were made available to veterans of the Civil War.⁹

From that time until the establishment of the Vocational Service Center placement offices were maintained steadily in one or more of the branches, for the purpose of rendering this service.

The placement service is recognized as an important step in the total vocational adjustment of the client. Many applicants who have a clear idea of what they want to do are served exclusively through placement. Others are first referred for general counseling and testing; following which they are referred back to the placement counselor with a general vocational objective. Referrals are then made to a

⁹ Guidance Committee, op. cit., p. 3.

job which is in accordance with the vocational plan. In counseling and placing the client, the general counselor and the placement counselor thus become team workers in the total vocational adjustment process. The counselor assists the client in deciding on the general area or field of work, and the placement counselor helps the client locate an appropriate job within the general field. The placement counselor also makes use of tests for the quick appraisal of aptitudes in one or more fields before referring applicants to employers. For example, where an applicant of unknown qualifications desires some job in an office, he is referred to the testing staff for a clerical test before referral is made to an employer. The work of the placement counselor compliments that of the general counselor in still another way -- that of interpreting current vocational trends. Daily lists of job offerings are provided for all counselors of the various Y.M.C.A. branches of the city. From time to time the placement counselors bring other members of the staff up-to-date with respect to changes in the employment market, and salary scales.

Credit Aid

The purpose of the Credit Aid Program is to assist promising unattached young men who find themselves embarrassed for lack of funds. They are granted temporary credit for all living needs at one of the Y.M.C.A. branches. The advantages

of this plan are obvious. A good many young men, even though needing such assistance, have regarded borrowing as a stigma. The Y.M.C.A. officials regard the Credit Aid Plan as a desirable aspect of the Vocational Service Center. The actual credit process is carried on in different branches of the Y.M.C.A. As it now works a young man receiving relief credit becomes a normal resident of Y.M.C.A.'s residence hall, the credit arrangement being held in confidence. He is also provided with sufficient cash to cover carfare and other incidental expenses while looking for a job or to help tide him over until the first pay check is received. The credit counseling is done by the regular placement counselors under the direction of the credit counselor.

Veterans Advisement

Throughout the first two years of operation of the Vocational Service Center a large number of returned veterans and servicemen and women were dealt with through the counseling and placement services. At one time appointments were made from six weeks to two months in advance, so large were the demands for services. In September, 1945, a contract was negotiated with the Veterans Administration through which counseling and testing facilities were made available on the fee basis to veterans referred from the Veterans Administration.¹⁰

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 3.

The Vocational Service Center was the second advisement center in New York City to serve veterans on this basis.

Through combined facilities for veterans advisement the agency now handles approximately four hundred and fifty veterans per month. In the first year of operation, ending September 30, 1946, approximately 2,800 veterans were counselled through the Veterans Advisement facilities, not including veterans dealt with through the general counseling, placement and credit aid phases of the program.¹¹

Staff and Scope of Work

The present staff of the Vocational Service Center consists of forty-seven full-time workers and eighteen part-time workers, a total of sixty-five. Some of the part-time workers fall only slightly short of full-time schedules. Thirty-four are professional workers, administrators, counselors, interviewers, psychometrists, and testing internes. Receptionists, stenographers, typists, file clerks and messengers make up the remainder of the staff.¹²

An annual budget of \$185,000 is required to operate the combined activities of the center. A bird's eye view of the scope of work of the Vocational Service Center is offered through examination of gross statistics covering the number

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid., p. 4.

of applicants dealt with, and a total number of interviews made by the agency from the time it opened its services in January, 1944 through August, 1946. Within this period a total of 22,685 new applicants for one or more of the services were received and dealt with. The servicing of these new applicants and others from previous months who returned for additional help, required a grand total of more than 43,635 interviews.¹³ This is a statistical reflection of the large amount of reciprocal traffic between the Vocational Service Center and other community agencies, such as churches, welfare agencies, and offices of the armed forces. Through these facilities and services of the Y.M.C.A. of the City of New York is attempting to "go to the second mile" with returning veterans, Y.M.C.A. members and other worthy citizens.

Throughout the next few years, as the scope of work with veterans is reduced, the agency will face the need of making the counseling resources available to an increasing number of civilian young men and women. There are no present intentions of relinquishing the counselor obligation to veterans. The Vocational Service Center is presently consolidating its relationship with the different Y.M.C.A. branches in preparation for a period of enlargement and intensified pioneering in meeting the needs of young people.

¹³ Ibid.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Study of Counseling and Guidance at the Harlem Branch Y.M.C.A. in New York City has revealed the following:

Counseling and Guidance had its beginning in the agency in January, 1944.

Counseling and Guidance is a separate department in the agency with a well organized program.

The agency has established a useful degree of uniformity in record keeping.

The Vocational Service Center is considered as an extension of the Branch's program, and referral to it is done only by the designated person or persons in the Branch's guidance office.

The program offers adequate provisions for the use of test materials, occupational placements, Credit Aid, Veterans' Advisement, and referral services.

The program coordinates community resources for the purpose of handling personal, social, mental and emotional problems.

The counseling program has its efforts focused on the individual rather than the problem

Counseling and Guidance is a professional way of helping normal people who are facing the problems of everyday living in a complexed society.

Counseling in the agency is given through private and confidential interviews.

The counselors imply sympathetic understanding during the interviewing process.

The future magnitude of the counseling task facing the Harlem Branch Y.M.C.A. and cooperating institutions in providing an effective counseling service represents a challenge to the profession of counseling everywhere.

The Study of Counseling and Guidance in relation to social problems at the Harlem Branch Y.M.C.A. reveals questions and answers on the following topics: (1) A Study of the Client, (2) Scope of Service, (3) Personnel of the Agency, (4) Records and Reports, (5) Cooperative Service and (6) Referral and Placement Services.

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